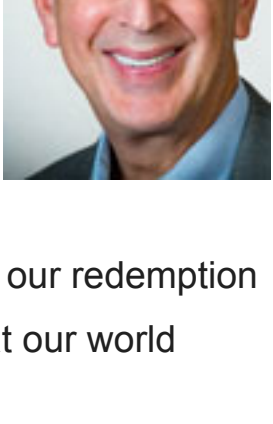


**Kenissa Konnections**  
**March 2021**

**Message from Rabbi Sid**

It feels like a time of great promise. Living in the Washington D.C. area, there is a sense that there are now people of experience and competence taking charge of the levers of government. Attendant to that, the commitment to use all available resources to beat the Covid pandemic has everyone hopeful that, by the summer time, our society can begin returning to normal. And, of course, in the Jewish calendar, we are approaching Pesach, the festival celebrating our redemption from slavery. May it be a metaphor for a larger redemption that our world desperately needs.



There are some exciting developments in our *Kenissa* world as well. A couple of weeks ago, JTA ran a [feature story](#) about *Kenissa* by Gary Rosenblatt, the editor emeritus of the *New York Jewish Week* and the dean of Jewish journalism. Gary joined us for our fifth *Kenissa* National Consultation last March at Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center in CT. We met right on the eve of the pandemic, with over 70 people in attendance (and no cancellations!). As we had done the previous year, we had a small delegation of senior professionals from major Jewish Federations around the country. Their presence was part of our strategy to give more visibility to the creativity of so many of the organizations that we have brought together under the *Kenissa* umbrella. The JTA story gave our effort wonderful visibility and also helped us advance this important agenda.

*Rabbi Sid's message continues at the link.*

[READ MORE](#)

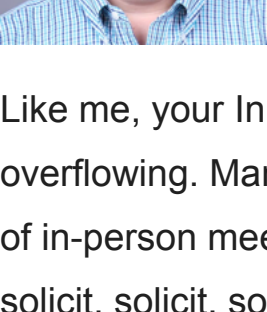
Starting this month, specifically, **Wednesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at 1pm (Eastern)**, Arinne Braverman, and Ephraim Gopin will join Rabbi Sid in facilitating a peer consulting session for members of the *Kenissa* Network. For additional information about these sessions, [click here](#) to read the rest of Rabbi Sid's message.

Time: Mar 17, 2021 01:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)  
<https://zoom.us/j/97725663629?pwd=Zmw1TltxYjQ0clmdHQvQXlMa9KUT09>

Meeting ID: 977 2566 3629  
Passcode: 010878

**Build and Raise**

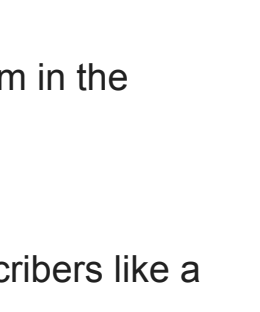
Building relationships to help raise more money



How are you incorporating email into your fundraising, marketing and storytelling mix?

Like me, your Inboxes are probably overflowing. Many organizations, in place of in-person meetings, have used email to solicit, solicit, solicit. But the fact is that [email should be used for a lot more](#) than just asking for a donation.

What's important to understand is that when someone subscribes to your emails and eNewsletter, it's a very big deal. They're saying that they want to create a relationship with you. They want to learn more about your organization, be educated about your mission and potentially become a partner in helping you solve a problem in the community.



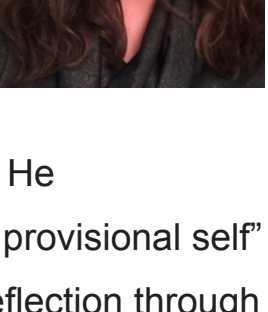
However, if you treat subscribers like a cash cow, if all you're doing is asking them to 'buy your product' like you were an eCommerce company, your efforts will fail. [Email is a two-way street](#) and you need to provide in order to get. Sending impact updates, educational pieces, emotional stories which connect the subscriber to your service recipients—that's how you build a relationship.

[READ MORE](#)

*Ephraim Gopin is the founder of [1832 Communications](#), an agency which helps nonprofits build relationships and raise more money by connecting their fundraising and [marketing strategies](#). You can subscribe to [Ephraim's free daily newsletter](#) which includes relevant content for any NPO role you fill.*

**Braver Leadership**

Lead wiser,  
Lead braver



In [this KelloggInsight article](#), Carter Cast advises against getting "stuck" in our career by encouraging us to continue to invest in professional development. He recommends "testing your provisional self" with suggestions for self-reflection through journaling to identify motives, interests, and blind spots. Once one's direction is clear, he encourages testing out new roles in low-risk and low-cost ways, like volunteering or serving on a task force.

One additional low-cost option not addressed in the article is virtual or in-person [job shadowing](#). Job shadowing often is well-utilized by students and recent graduates at the beginning of their careers, but woefully under-appreciated as a professional development opportunity. Just as an organization would invest in proper preparation to recruit the best talent, those looking to use this tool for professional development should create a schedule to maximize the experience.

You can anticipate needing time "off" to respond to emails or to take closed-door meetings. After some initial shadowing, you can plan a few projects to give your shadow to work "on" during such times. For instance, a Development Director or Executive Director might invite her shadow to write a major donor thank you letter, using a sample she provides and based on the shadow's experience or personal knowledge of a recent program.

[READ MORE](#)

*Arinne Braverman is a Kenissa Network member, Jewish Organizing Initiative alumna, and currently serves as the Executive Director of Returning the Sparks and President of [From Strength to Strength](#).*

**Jewish Megatrends and Responses**

*Editor's Note: Every Kenissa Network member was asked to respond to Rabbi Sid's lead essay in [Jewish Megatrends](#) on the future of the Jewish community. We'll be featuring one of those essays in each issue.*

**A Community within a Community**

Lauren Schreiber-Sasaki

An interfaith family walks into a *shul*. Or a JCC. Or any other Jewish space.

The flyer, poster, sign reads: "The door is open, and everyone is welcome."

But what does that really mean?

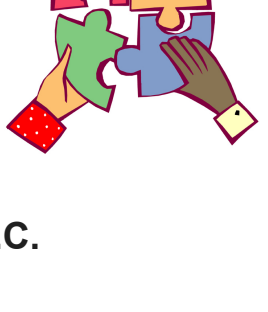
They wonder - when you address the room, will you be speaking to Jews only? Will you use Hebrew words, and not translate them, so that they are a secret code only one of us can hear? Will you use Yiddish, and not explain your inside joke? Will you marry us? Can we both be members? Can we stand at the *bima*, together, when our children come of age? Are we Jewish enough? Do we count? Do I count?

[READ MORE](#)

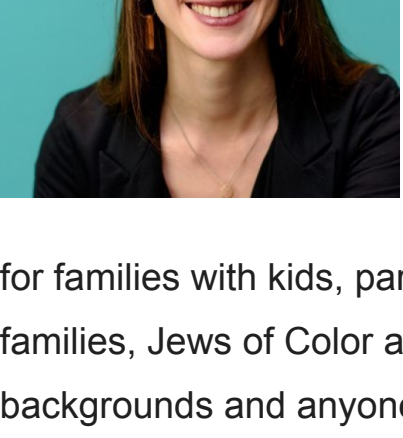
**How We Built This**

*Editor's Note: Every Kenissa Network member was asked to explain how they launched their new enterprise, a feature we call "How We Built This".*

*We'll feature one organization in each issue.*



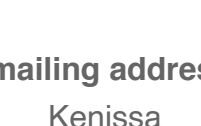
**Lauren Spokane, New Synagogue Project, Washington D.C.**



New Synagogue Project (NSP) is building a spiritually vibrant, radically inclusive, Jewish community in Washington, DC that reflects our vision for a world of justice, equity, and liberation. NSP is a startup Jewish community and we are innovating new expressions of Jewish life that speak to the needs and values of our members, most of whom have never belonged to a synagogue as an adult. Our community is being created by and for families with kids, partnered and single people, queer and trans people, interfaith families, Jews of Color and white Jews, Jews from many religious and secular backgrounds and anyone interested in exploring and experiencing Jewish life.

NSP launched in May 2018 with a series of Shabbat events. We immediately found incredible hunger and excitement for what we were building. Almost three years later, we have 14 member-led teams, 15 programs each month, and, before the pandemic, about 125 attendees at a typical Friday night Shabbat program. Now, 50-60 attendees join for virtual services. Since we launched our sliding-scale membership structure in August 2018, in which anyone can join regardless of financial means, more than 250 households — representing 406 people, including 81 children — have joined. There are hundreds more community members connected to NSP who have not yet opted into membership, including over 1,000 people who attended High Holiday programming or services this year.

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